Description:

Although the cultural descriptions offered by early modern English writers were never systematic or scientific in the modern sense of ethnography, they demonstrate English interest in the appearance, customs, politics, and religion of people other than themselves. A broad range of texts including travelers’ accounts, promotional tracts, poems, and plays reflect English writers’ perceptions of non-English peoples. Recent studies have generally focused on one ethnic category – Jews, for instance, or Turks – or one area of the globe, such as the new world or Africa. Others have attempted to provide a theoretical framework for understanding early modern cultural description. By reassessing such works, and by examining a wide range of primary sources, this seminar will try to see the world as Shakespeare’s contemporaries saw it. Using Andrew Boorde’s *The Fyrst Boke of the Introduction of Knowledge*, George Abbot’s *A Brief Description of the World*, and John Speed’s *The Theatre of Great Britain* as touchstones, we will also consider how cultural description developed and changed during Shakespeare’s lifetime as England became more involved with overseas trade and travel. Additional readings will address a broad range of peoples – from America to Africa to India to the Ottoman Empire to Europe – in an attempt to tease out contradictions, confluences, and cross-fertilizations in England’s engagements with other cultures, elements that not only generated a discourse of ethnography but also contributed to the construction of an emerging English nationalism.

There will be no writing assignments for the seminar. Instead, during the discussion sessions after tea (3:30-4:30) participants will make brief presentations about their current research and the ways in which our readings have enhanced their thinking.

**Schedule:** Fridays, 1-4:30. 1 October through 17 December, except 29 October and 26 November.

**Touchstone Texts:** The Folger will make facsimile copies of these texts available to us for frequent reference:


**Core Texts:** Assigned readings – to be supplemented with the Folger’s holdings in secondary and primary materials – will be taken from the following books, which are readily available in paperback from any book provider.

- Hadfield, Andrew, ed. *Amazons, Savages and Machiavels: Travel and Colonial Writing*
Hadfield, Andrew and Willy Maley, eds. A View of the Present State of Ireland by
Kamps, Ivo and Jyotsna G. Singh, Travel Knowledge: European “Discoveries” in the

We will also assume knowledge of Shakespeare’s Othello, Merchant of Venice, and The
Tempest, as well as Marlowe’s Jew of Malta; any edition may be used.

Recommended Reading: The materials listed are a starting point to a working
bibliography which will grow as the seminar progresses. No one is expected to read all
the texts listed here, but it would be helpful if seminar participants would read widely
from the recommended reading and browse in the Hakluyt Society’s ample publications
(on the balcony in the Old Reading Room) and in modern editions of Hakluyt’s Principal
Navigations [G240.H2 A2 1965, etc.] and Samuel Purchas, Hakluytus Posthumus or
Purchas His Pilgrimes [G159 .P985].

Session One, October 1   Historical and Theoretical Perspectives

Touchstones: Boorde, A1r
   Speed, Theatre, Prefatory Material

Core: Hadfield, 1-39
   Hamlin, William M. The Image of America in Montaigne,
   [PR129.A4 H36 1995]

Recommended:
Secondary:
   Bhabha, Homi, The Location of Culture (New York, 1994).
   Gillies, John, Shakespeare and the Geography of Difference (Cambridge, 1994),
   Hadfield, Andrew, Literature, Travel and Colonial Writing in The English
   Loomba, Ania, Colonialism / Postcolonialism (London, 1998), [on order]
   [PR3069.R33 L66 2002]
   Parks, George B., “Tudor travel literature: a brief history,” The Hakluyt
   no.144-145]
   Todorov, Tzvetan, The Conquest of America: The Question of Difference
   Urness, Carol, “Purchas as editor,” The Purchas Handbook, ed. L. E.
Session Two, October 8  The Irish, Scottish and Welsh

**Touchstones:**  Boorde, B2r-D3r
                      Abbot, D1r – D24
                      Speed, *Theatre*, 99-147

**Core:** Hadfield and Maley, *View of the Present State of Ireland.*

**Recommended:**

**Primary:**

**Secondary:**
Hadfield, Andrew and John McVeagh, eds. *Strangers to that Land: British Perceptions of Ireland from the Reformation to the Famine* (GerrardsCross, 1994). [on order]
Murphy, Andrew, *But the Irish Sea Betwixt Us: Ireland, Colonialism and Renaissance Literature* (Lexington, KY, 1999). [PR129.I7 M87 1999]

Session Three, October 15

**Continental Europeans**

**Touchstones:** Boorde, D3v – M2r  
Abbot, A2r-A8v, D2r-D4r  
Speed, *Prospect*, 7-8, 15-32

**Core:** Hadfield, 41-115.

**Recommended:**

**Primary:**
Anon., *The English Ape, the Italian imitation, the Footestepeps of Fraunce*  
(London, 1588). [PR1400 20698.2]  
Contarini, Gasparo, *The Commonwealth of Venice, Translated out of Italian into English, by Lewes Lewkenor Esquire*  
(London, 1599). [PR1400 5642]  
Coryat, Thomas, *Coryat’s Crudities, Hastily gobled . . .*  
Lynche, Richard, *An Historical Treatise of the Travels of Noah into Europe*  
(London, 1601). [rare only]  

**Secondary:**
Marrapodi, Michele, et al. *Shakespeare’s Italy: Functions of Italian Locations in Renaissance Drama* (Manchester, 1997). [PR3069.18 S5]


**Session Four, October 22**

**Turks**

**Touchstones:** Boorde, M4v-N1v
Speed, *Prospect*, 33-36.

**Core:** Hadfield, 166-178
Kamps and Singh, 23-124.

**Recommended:**

**Primary:**
Knolles, Richard, *Generall Historie of the Turks* (London, 1603). [rare only]
[PR1400 21726]
Soranzo, L.? *the Ottoman of Lazaro Soranzo* (London 1603) [nif, get from EEBO]

**Secondary:**


[Folger exhibit catalog]

Session Five, November 5    Turks cont.

Touchstones: Same as Oct. 22
Core: Vitkus, Three Turkish Plays
Recommended: Marlowe, Christopher, Tamburlaine, I and II.
Otherwise, same as Oct. 22.

Session Six, November 12    Jews

Touchstones: Boorde, N2r-N4r
             Abbot, B7r-C1v
Core: Hadfield, 166-178.
      Shakespeare, Merchant of Venice
      Marlowe, The Jew of Malta
Recommended:

Primary:
Bunny, Edmund, The Sceptre of Judah: Or, What Maner of Government It Was,
That Unto the Common-Wealth or Church or Israel Was by the Law Of
God Appointed (London, 1584). [rare only]

Secondary:
Carroll, Clare, "Between Hope and Fear: Jews in Early Modern Europe,
In Voices for Tolerance in an Age of Persecution
(Washington D. C., 2004), pp. 63-82. [Folger exhibit catalog]
Shapiro, James, Shakespeare and the Jews (New York, 1996). [PR2825 .S44
1996]
Vitkus, Daniel, Turning Turk: English Theater and the Multicultural
Mediterranean (New York, 2003), pp. 163-98. [PR 129 M48
V58 2003]

Session Seven, November 19    Africans and Black Moors

Touchstones: Boorde, M3v-M4v
             Abbot, C1v- D1r
             Speed, Prospect, 5-6.
Core: Hadfield, 117-151.
Kamps and Singh, 211-266.
Shakespeare, *Othello*.

**Recommended:**

**Primary:**
Hawkins, John, *A True declaration of the Troublesome voyage . . . to . . . Guynea and the West Indies* (Amsterdam, 1973) [PR1400 12961]
Purchas, Samuel, *Hakluytus Posthumus or Purchase His Pilgrimes* (Glasgow, 1905-07), VI: 172-233 and 407-543. [G159 .P985]

**Secondary:**
Session Eight, December 3  

**East Indians and Asians**

**Touchstones:** Abbot, B1r- B7v  

**Core:** Hadfield, 189-234.  
Kamps and Singh, 127-207.

**Recommended:**

**Primary:**
Linschoten, Jan Huyghen van, *The Voyage of Jan Huyghen van Linschoten to the East Indies* (Hakluyt Society, 1885). [G161 .H2 no.70, 71]

**Secondary:**
Archer, John, *Old Worlds: Egypt, Southwest Asia, India and Russia in Early*
Session Nine, December 10    Natives of the “New World”

**Touchstones:**    Abbot, D5v – E2r
                   Speed, Prospect, 9-10, 41-44.

**Core:**    Hadfield, 235-308
             Shakespeare, The Tempest

**Recommended:**

**Primary:**
Barlowe, Arthur, “First Voyage Made to the Coastes of America,” in Hakluyt, Principall Navigations (Glasgow, 1904), VIII: 297-309.
Eden, Richard, The Decades of the New World (London, 1555) [E143 .M3 no.4]
Lane, Ralph, “An account of the particularities . . . “ in Hakluyt, Principall Navigations (Glasgow, 1904), VIII:320-345.

Secondary:
Fuller, Mary, Voyages in Print: English Travel to America, 1576-1624 (Cambridge, 1995). [E127 .F8]
__________, Settling with the Indians: The Meeting of English and Indian Cultures in America, 1580-1640 (Totowa, N. J., 1980) [E77 .K8]
Scanlan, Thomas, Colonial Writing and the New World, 1583-1671 (Cambridge, 1999). [on order]

**Session Ten, December 17  Conclusions**

**Recommended:**

**Primary:**

**Secondary:**